

Meeting Date: August 6, 2024
Department: Legal & Legislative Services
Report No.: LLS-2024-08
Submitted by: Brianna Hammer-Keidel, Director of Legal & Legislative Services/Clerk
Approved by: Trisha McKibbin, Chief Administrative Officer
SUBJECT: **Animal Control Program Update**

RECOMMENDATION: THAT: Council receive Report LLS-2024-08 Animal Control Program Update for information, and further;

THAT: Council authorize a 1-year contract for comprehensive animal control services with Animal Care Centre Lobo in the amount of \$12,500 excl. HST per month from September 1, 2024 to August 31, 2025 inclusive.

BACKGROUND:

At its July 2, 2024 meeting, Council received a report advising that Animal Care Centre (ACC) Lobo was the lone respondent to a Request for Tender for Animal Control Services at a total of \$150,000 per year excl. HST for a period of three years. ACC had previously been providing animal care and control services to the Municipality at the price of \$60,000 per year since 2018. Municipal staff were informed that increasing expenses for the program, such as vet bills, boarding provisions (such as dog food and utilities), and ACC staff time, exceeded the contract payment price every year and the lower rate was no longer sustainable for the organization. While approving a two-month contract extension for July and August 2024 at the new rate, Council requested further information regarding local animal control programs.

COMMENTS:

Seven of the eight lower-tier municipalities in Middlesex County, including Strathroy-Caradoc, offer a comprehensive animal control program for both dogs and cats, including services such as pound keeping (a licenced and inspected holding facility), pickups of stray dogs and cats, adoption programs, medical care for sick and injured animals, after-hours call-out service for emergencies, assistance with kennel licence reviews, enforcement of municipal animal control by-laws and provincial legislation, and animal licencing.

Humane Society London Middlesex (HSLM) based out of London currently provides comprehensive animal control services for Southwest Middlesex, Adelaide Metcalfe, and Newbury, for a flat annual

rate. Hillside Kennels based out of Innerkip currently provides comprehensive animal control services for Lucan Biddulph, Middlesex Centre, and Thames Centre, for a monthly flat rate + fee-per-service.

The Municipality of North Middlesex is currently engaged in a one-year pilot program with ACC offering limited pound keeping services at a monthly rate + fee-per-service. Municipal staff noted that the reduction in service levels, particularly the exclusion of cats from their animal control program, has led to concerns from members of that community.

FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

HSLM has expressed an interest in quoting on the provision of animal control services in Strathroy-Caradoc in the future, but would prefer to wait until their new facility is finalized and opened later this year and greater holding capacity would be available. A one year contract would allow for existing service levels to continue, while providing an opportunity to receive additional proposals in the future if desired by Council.

CONSULTATION:

Middlesex County Lower-Tier Municipalities
Animal Care Centre Lobo
Director of Finance

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

\$65,000 was budgeted for the Animal Control Service Contract in 2024. Approval of a one-year contract, in addition to the approved contract extension for July and August, would lead to a total budget overage of approximately \$40,000 for 2024. Additional funds would be re-allocated from reserves to cover the overage for 2024. The remainder of the service contract would be reflected in the 2025 operating budget.

ALTERNATIVE(S) TO THE RECOMMENDATION:

1. Council to provide alternate direction.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This matter is in accord with the following strategic priorities:

Municipal Customer Service: The Municipality offers seamless, responsive service and an exceptional experience for every customer.

Managing the Challenges of Growth for the Municipal Organization: Strathroy-Caradoc will be an inclusive community where growth is managed to accommodate a range of needs and optimize municipal resources. We are committed to maintaining operational efficiency and economies of scale through these times of change.

ATTACHMENTS:

Animal Care Centre Lobo - 2023 Annual Animal Control Report